

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-5 are pending in this application. Claims 1-5 are amended and claims 6-19 are added herein. Claims 1, 4, 9 and 16 are independent.

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over Nishizaki, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,616,535).

Claims 1 and 4 are amended to clarify that the data reading means includes an upward-facing recess configured such that the token with built-in IC chip is fitted into the recess. It is respectfully submitted that the applied art lacks any teaching or suggestion of a data reader having such a recess for a token with a built-in IC chip. It is further respectfully submitted that because Nishizaki utilizes an IC card, the disclosed game machine lacks any need for a data reader with such a recess.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

It is also noted that claims 1-5 have additionally been amended to delete unnecessary limitations and for clarification.

New claims 6-8 depend from parent claims 1 or 4 and are added to recite previously disclosed but unclaimed limitations, which are for example shown and described with reference to Figure 3B.

Claims 9-19 are added to recite the invention in a somewhat different manner. Each of the new independent claims (i.e., claims 9 and 16) require the upward facing recess discussed above, and accordingly are distinguishable over the applied prior art on at least the grounds discussed above.

It is further respectfully submitted that features recited in the dependent claims also independently distinguish over the applied prior art. For example, it is respectfully

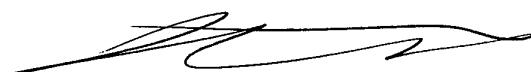
submitted that Nishizaki lacks the features recited in each of claims 6-8.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed local telephone number, in order to expedite resolution of any remaining issues and further to expedite passage of the application to issue, if any further comments, questions or suggestions arise in connection with the application.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 1227.43061X00) and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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